

**Job Aid**

# REALM Assessment

**Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine**

Patient name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Reading level \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic \_\_\_\_\_ Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Grade completed \_\_\_\_\_

List 1	List 2	List 3			
Fat	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allergic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pelvic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Menstrual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pill	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jaundice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Testicle	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dose	<input type="checkbox"/>	Infection	<input type="checkbox"/>	Colitis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eye	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	Behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smear	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prescription	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nerves	<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexuality	<input type="checkbox"/>
Germ	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gallbladder	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcoholism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calories	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irritation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Constipation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cancer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Miscarriage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gonorrhea	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caffeine	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inflammatory	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attack	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arthritis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kidney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hepatitis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hormones	<input type="checkbox"/>	Menopause	<input type="checkbox"/>	Antibiotics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Herpes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diagnosis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seizure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Abnormal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Potassium	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bowel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Syphilis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anemia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asthma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hemorrhoids	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obesity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rectal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nausea	<input type="checkbox"/>	Osteoporosis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Directed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Impetigo	<input type="checkbox"/>

List 1 score \_\_\_\_\_ List 2 score \_\_\_\_\_ List 3 score \_\_\_\_\_

**Raw score** \_\_\_\_\_

Directions:

1. Give the patient a laminated copy of the REALM form and score answers on an unlaminated copy that is attached to a clipboard. Hold the clipboard at an angle so that the patient is not distracted by your scoring. Say: "I want to hear you read as many words as you can from this list. Begin with the first word in List 1 and read aloud. When you come to a word you cannot read, do the best you can or say, 'blank' and go onto the next word."
2. If the patient takes more than five seconds on a word, say "blank" and point to the next word, if necessary, to move the patient along. If the patient begins to miss every word, have him or her pronounce only known words.
3. Count as an error any word not attempted or mispronounced. Score by marking a plus (+) after each correct word, a check (✓) after each mispronounced word, and a minus (-) after words not attempted. Count as correct any self-corrected words.
4. Count the number of correct words for each list, and record the numbers on the "Score" line. Total the numbers, and match the score with its grade equivalent in the table below.

**Scores and Grade Equivalents for the REALM Questionnaire**

Raw score	Grade range
0 to 18	Third grade and below; will not be able to read most low-literacy materials; will need repeated oral instructions, materials composed primarily of illustrations, or audio or video tapes
19 to 44	Fourth to sixth grade; will need low-literacy materials; may not be able to read prescription labels
45 to 60	Seventh to eighth grade; will struggle with most patient education materials; will not be offended by low-literacy materials
61 to 66	High school; will be able to read most patient education materials

The content for this material was excerpted from Health Literacy: The Gap Between Physicians and Patients. *American Family Physician*. Available at: <http://webmm.ahrq.gov/case.aspx?caseID=53#figure1>

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